

Dr. Kara's ABC's of Letters of Recommendation Requests

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So you're thinking about continuing your graduate studies in a doctoral or law school program? Or you're applying for an amazing opportunity or fellowship? I'm happy to support as many applications as I can muster! To make that process easier, and to ensure you receive the strongest letter possible, please use the below guidelines:

Do:

1. Request your letter at least 6 weeks in advance. My calendar fills rather quickly as the quarter progresses, and I may not be able to accommodate last minute requests.
2. Send a copy of your CV, UChicago transcript, SOP/Candidate Statement, MA thesis proposal (if on-going) or final copy (if graduated), and List of Schools you plan to apply to.
3. Include a due date in your request. You are not placed on my calendar until you have shared a due date (preferably shared 6 weeks before that due date).
4. For law school and PhD programs, also include your LSAT and/or GRE scores.
5. Use Interfolio for PhD applications as often as possible.
6. Limit non-Interfolio-accepting programs to no more than 5 requests. It becomes incredibly difficult to manage more than 5 additional links beyond the Interfolio submission per student.
*This is also an important opportunity for you to take seriously the importance of fit in your PhD applications.
7. Let me know if there are certain issues you would like me to address in the letter, or if there are weaknesses in your application I can help mitigate.

Some notes on letter writing:

The more interaction I have had with you, the stronger letter I can produce. If I have only served as your preceptor and you have not taken a class with me, I recommend you seek out other letter writers who can speak more specifically to your skills and potential.

In CIR specifically, if your final thesis evaluation from your preceptor has any areas marked as "falls short of expectations," I will not be able to write a strong letter for you.